

Prison regulations do NOT permit you to use Rule 39 on correspondence with Inside Justice.

Inside Justice is a small not-for-profit charity which aims to assist prisoners who claim they are innocent. We have very limited funding and cannot help everyone but the aim of the Unit is to try to find experts who can help with a case and try and gain wider publicity for deserving cases. We are ONLY interested in helping people who are entirely innocent of the crime they are currently serving a sentence. Please do not take our resources away from those who are genuinely innocent if this is not you.

Criteria Test

The first step in an application to us is to decide whether you pass our basic criteria test. To keep the system fair for all, there can be no exceptions.

In order to pass our basic criteria you must:

1. Have at least 5 years left to serve as a custodial sentence
2. Still be serving a custodial sentence for the offence for which you claim innocence
3. You must be claiming complete, factual innocence of the crime you have been convicted of.
4. You must be convicted of an offence which relied on more than just somebody's word against you. An example of this is sexual offence cases. We do not deal with sexual offence case with no prospect of objective evidence. So, if you were convicted solely on a verbal account given by the complainant we cannot consider your case. If you believe there is some piece of supporting evidence, which we can test or search for you can apply to us.

We do not deal with:

5. Complaints primarily about your sentence. We do not help with sentencing issues or legal questions about the charge. If you want help in this regard you could consider writing again to the prisoners' newspaper Inside Time. You will need to write to them separately.
6. Complaints primarily about the service you received from your legal team. Complaints of that nature should be addressed to the Solicitors' Regulation Authority (The Cube, 199 Wharfside Street, Birmingham, B1 1RN) or the Legal Ombudsman (Edward House, King Edward's Square, Birmingham B1 2RA
7. Complaints primarily about alleged police corruption or mishandling of your case. The best agency to deal with such matters is the Independent Police Complaints Commission (PO Box 473, Sale M33 0BW).

8. Scottish cases which are out of our legal jurisdiction. You may want to apply to the Scottish Criminal Cases Review Commission (17 Renfield St, Glasgow G2 5AH).

If you believe you meet our criteria, you should complete the application form which is enclosed. You will see at the top of the form that we will not be able to assess your case until we have received specific pieces of paperwork from your trial or appeal. You should not send your application form in until you have this paperwork. Regrettably we cannot search for it for you due to our limited resources but hope the information below will assist you.

How to find your paperwork

There are various places you can contact to ask for your paperwork if you do not already have it:

- i. your trial solicitor;
- ii. the court where your trial was heard and ask them for the name and address of the "Transcription Service" which keeps records. You will then need to write to them separately to ask for the papers you require.
- iii. The Criminal Cases Review Commission

Contacting your solicitor is always the first place to start. They might already have a copy of one or more of these documents from their own work and should provide it to you free of charge, or for a minimum photocopy charge. If you are sure the solicitor does not have the papers you could think about who else might have it. If your legal team considered whether you had Grounds to Appeal, ask them whether your trial barrister would have a copy. There should be no cost (beyond, perhaps, a basic photocopying charge) for them to provide this to you if it was produced.

Transcription Services are contracted by each court to record and retain transcripts of proceedings from the trial. They are only legally required to keep transcripts from trials for 5 or 7 years depending on the crime type. Some transcription services do keep records beyond these minimum time periods though so it is always worth you checking with them. Transcription services are commercial companies and make a charge for transcripts they supply. Inside Justice does not have a budget to routinely pay these costs. Legal Aid may be obtained by your solicitor to cover the cost or, if that is denied, some applicants ask their friends and family to cover the cost who may need to do some fundraising on your behalf.

If your case was heard at the Court of Appeal or Supreme Court you may find a copy of the Judgment online. You could ask a family member, friend or somebody from within the prison library or education department to look for you.

If your cases has been reviewed by the CCRC they will have produced a Statement of Reasons. You will have been supplied with a copy of this when their decision was made. If you have lost

it, contact them to ask for another copy. You could also ask them if they can let you have copies of any of the other documents listed at the top of our form.

Sending the application in

Once we have received the paperwork we will then undertake an assessment which is designed to identify whether there is enough scope within your case for a Case Worker to be assigned. You will receive a letter from us at this point which will outline the next steps. Please bear in mind this process can take in excess of a month so please be patient as we work through your application.

The kinds of cases we take on

At Inside Justice, our greatest asset is our Advisory Panel of experts. We have brought together a world-class collection of scientists, lawyers, investigators, journalists and experts who review the applications which our Case Work Team have the best chance of being assisted by the Advisory Panel. We are looking for cases which make best use of the experts' time. We are looking for cases where scientific evidence could be tested using the latest techniques. We are looking for cases where investigation methods, techniques and results are reviewed in order to identify whether information has not, for instance, been disclosed properly.

For a case to go to the Advisory Panel we are looking for strands of evidence we could investigate and/or the potential for us to commission new expert work. The Casework Team will not recommend cases to go to the Advisory Panel if the issues being raised by the applicant have already been aired (at trial, appeal or with the CCRC) or if we have been unable to identify any other new work which we believe could be considered legally new or important enough to become a Ground of Appeal.

We are always asking: what could we actually do?

If we cannot identify anything practical, we will not take a case on.

When is an application an Inside Justice case?

It is important to bear in mind that a vast number of people apply to Inside Justice every single week and yet we are a very small charity with limited resources. Of the 1100 applications we have received to date we are only actively working on 1% of those cases. Overturning a wrongful conviction takes an enormous amount of resources. An acceptance of your application to us is not an indication that we consider yours to be "An Inside Justice Case". We will only say that the cases which our Advisory Panel of experts agree we should take on are Inside Justice cases. This is an important distinction because many people believe their case is "with" Inside Justice or being "reviewed" by Inside Justice when in truth they have simply applied to us; we have not agreed to take the case on at all.

If your case has evidence in one of the following areas of expertise, we are most likely to be able to help:

- DNA
- Blood Pattern Analysis
- Fibre Evidence
- Fingerprint Evidence
- Pathology
- CCTV Evidence
- Cell-Site Evidence
- Reviewing Unused Material or reaching suspected undisclosed material

If there is another area of expertise relevant to your case, not listed we can probably find the relevant expert to assist.

Yours sincerely

The Inside Justice Team

insidejustice

Miscarriage of Justice Unit

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www.insidejustice.co.uk

This information is not to be construed as legal advice. Please do not rely on the information provided as an alternative option to seeking professional legal advice from your appointed solicitor, lawyer or legal defence team. Inside Justice recommends that any specific questions about your ongoing legal matter should be raised via a consultation with, or the appointment of, a professional criminal defence provider. Inside Justice is not responsible for any errors or omissions, or for the results obtained from the use of this information.